UNITY

An Organ of Reasonable Religion.

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."—*Tennyson.*

No. 25. [Vol. II.—13] October, 1905. ONE PENNY.

Varieties.

Our Father, while our hearts unlearn
The creeds that wrong Thy name,
Still let our hallowed altars burn
With faith's undying flame.

Not by the lightning gleams of wrath
Our souls Thy face shall see;
The star of Love must light the path
That leads to heaven and Thee.

—O. W. Holmes.

This world is strange and often terrible; but be not afraid, all will come right at last. Rest will conquer Fear; Order will conquer Disorder; Health will conquer Sickness; Joy will conquer Sorrow; Pleasure will conquer Pain; Life will conquer Death; Right will conquer Wrong. ALL WILL BE WELL AT LAST.—C. Kingsley ("Madame How and Lady Why.")

His satisfaction with the Unitarian fellowship was always in proportion to its worthiness to bear the title given to it—"The Unsectarian Sect." If the form of the body was necessarily sectarian, so much the more earnest must it be to prove its unsectarian spirit, its free assent to truth wherever found, its cordial recognition of Christian character in association with whatever form of thought.—J. W. Chadwick, on "Channing."

We limit not the truth of God
To our poor reach of mind,
By notions of our day and sect,
Crude, partial, and confined;
No, let a new and better hope
Within our hearts be stirred;
The Lord hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from his word.

—G. Rawson.

I can have no distrust and no fear of God; no fear of ultimate failure or future torment. Suffering I may have in another life: I will meet it gladly, and thank God; it is medical and not malicious. In the popular theology God is represented as a Jesuitical Inquisitor; but the Infinite God is a protector, a Father and Mother.—Theodore Parker.

"Fear God," said the clergyman. But my soul answered: "I am not afraid of God—He is a friend of mine."—Bolton Hall.

Immortality.

Let me be sure of two things—first of Thine Infinite Perfection, O Father in Heaven! then of my own Immortality—and I am safe, I fear nothing; I am not a transient bubble on the sea of Time, I shall outlast the "everlasting hills," I am immortal as the monads of matter, immortal as its laws! I may rely on myself, respect myself, feel within me the yearnings after immortality, and I know there is an Infinite Heart which yearns infinitely for me and will take me to itself and bless me at the last.

Then I can rely on something better than I see with my eyes—on the Ideal Excellence which I think in my heart. I can make a sacrifice for it; I can postpone my Now for an immortal Then; I can labour for noble things which it will take a thousand years to accomplish. Things about me may fail, the mountain may fall and come to nought, and the rock be removed out of its place, be exhaled a vapour to the sky—I shall not fail.

* * * * *

At the grave the "Atheist" and the theological "Christian" look each other in the face; one has laid away his daughter for annihilation—he is the father of nothing; the other has buried his son in eternal torment, the father of a devil's victim, of a soul for ever damned! What comfort has the one from Nothing, the other from Hell? Human Nature tells both, "It is a lie. Atheism is here a lie; the popular theology is there another lie."

Yes, it is a lie. Eternal morning follows the night; a rainbow scarfs the shoulders of every cloud weeping its rain away to become flowers on land and pearls at sea; Life rises out of the grave, the Soul cannot be held by festering flesh. Absolute Religion puts this ghastly theology to everlasting rest; the Infinite Mother will mercifully chasten, heal, and bless even the prodigal whom death surprised penitent; Love shall cast out fear.

—Theodore Parker.

An Open Letter for Open Minds.

By the Rev. G. CRITCHLEY, B.A.

Dear Friends,—It is matter of common knowledge that many people, with frankly "open minds," on the subject of religion, are repelled from Unitarianism and all other forms of the liberal faith, for the reason that they appear to be destitute of those qualities which give space for the aspirations of the spirit, and offer sympathetic recognition to the instinctive longings of the human heart.

An ancient prophet once put his objection to one of the great religions of his time in the striking words, "There is no coal here that a man may warm himself at; there is no fire here that a man may sit down before"; and those pungent sentences aptly describe the feelings of many devout and thoughtful persons in this regard.

Profoundly dissatisfied as many of these people are with the subtleties and insincerities of orthodox Christianity, they are, at the same time, unable to find in any of the liberal or rational interpretations of it that warmth, solace, and inspiration which every religion, worthy of the name, should put into human life.

Now it must be confessed that there is, to say the very least, apparent force in this objection. It has been the ungrateful, but inevitable task of liberal religion to criticise and deny much that has been taught by orthodox Christianity. Its attitude has been, and is, to a great extent, controversial. Reform is not effected without conflict. Falsehood must be attacked, if it is to be destroyed.

The ground must first be cleared of error before the temple of truth can be erected, and consequently the first energies of progressive religious thinkers have been largely expended in pointing out and removing the falsities rooted in many popular beliefs.

Hence the impression has been produced on those who have not gone deeply into the matter, that this so-called liberal religion is in reality a mere system of negation. Its work of criticism on the Bible, theology, ecclesiasticism, and the like, appears to be entirely destructive, while its necessarily continuous appeal to reason gives seeming warrant to the conclusion that its sole concern is with the intellect, to the exclusion of those elements of religion which appeal to the imagination and the heart.

But such a view is both partial and unjust. With the really religious progressist this destructiveness is simply a means to an end, and that end may be broadly defined as the restoration of God to His rightful place in the religion of the Christian world. It has been the evil task of Christian theology, ever since it began, to stray away from the teaching of the Master, to transfer the more gracious and inviting attributes of God, especially those of love, mercy and sympathetic understanding (Ps. 103) to Jesus Christ, and to make the personal realisation of the benefit to be derived from them dependent on the acceptance of certain views of Christ's person and work.

By this process, the Divine Being has been robbed of His attractiveness, and made something less than the Great Central Goodness to which seeking souls might turn in happy confidence that His benevolence was infinite and universal.

"The Holy One" has thus been limited to the functions of Creator, Judge, Despot of the Universe, and for millions of Christians he sits enthroned in threatening grandeur behind the Christ, who has taken his place as the merciful and gracious one.

"I love Jesus, but I am afraid of God," was the naive confession of an educated Christian woman on a certain occasion to her minister; and there can be little doubt that the general feelings of average orthodoxy found expression upon her lips.

Christolatry has supplanted the worship of God in the actual religion of ordinary believers. Christ has become not only God, but *the* God to them, and the supreme purpose of the Master, to bring men to the All-Father God, has been defeated within the circle of his own disciples.

Now, it is the great task of liberal religion to reverse this process, and restore these attributes of love, sympathy, mercy, and the rest to the common conception of God.

When this is done, and people are made to understand that liberal religion does not consist of a mere set of intellectual propositions and ethical rules, but is indeed a Gospel of God—they will find this faith all-sufficient for all need.

What fuller source of light, comfort, and inspiration for human souls can there be than the assured conviction that there is an abiding Spiritual Presence of infinite love and goodness waiting to be gracious to all who seek in sincerity and truth.

"That your faith and hope might be in God."

"I will arise and go to my Father."

"I do not say that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you."

Once let it be realised that liberal religion holds the Gospel folded in those words, and all that those words imply, then it will be found that nothing is lacking from it which can bring grace, consolation, and hope into human life, and the complaint of coldness and barrenness will surely die away.

A Thought-provoking Problem.

(To the Editor of "Unity.")

Sir,—In your issue for August there is a story of a lad writing with a diamond upon a window-pane. The moral attempted to be drawn from it is contained in these words which follow: "Not so the soul of man, what is written on that abides." I have often doubted, of late years, the correctness of this and similar statements.

There is one, for instance, in Templar's Moral and Religious Lessons, where a boy is said to have knocked nails into a post whenever he did wrong, and pulled them out again when he resisted some temptation or accomplished some good act, and, when congratulated upon at last having a post without any nails, replied: "But the scars are all there."

My belief is now, that this, like the mark of the diamond on the window-pane, is a false analogy.

Just think for one moment of the multitude of impressions which are all day and every day coming upon the soul, the inward nature of every human being; the number of acts crowded into every day. How can it be argued that every one of these leaves an indelible impression which must abide for ever? It is clearly and manifestly extremely unlikely, if not impossible. Even supposing that you take only those impressions and acts which are of most importance at the time. How many of these is it at all likely have left an indelible impression upon our lives?

It is quite an unprovable assumption that, though we are quite unconscious of such indelible impressions here, they may make their appearance hereafter.

It is manifest, at least to me, that while no doubt the prevailing tone of these impressions has been instrumental in the formation of character, yet that the effect of each upon the fluid, impressionable, highly sensitive nature of man must be, from the nature of the case, exceedingly minute. Comparable not to the marks of a diamond upon a window-pane, but rather to the footprints upon the soft, yielding sand which may be obliterated by the next tide.

Another most marvellous provision which becomes more apparent as life wears on, is that the unpleasant, the unhappy, the painful memories disappear and are overshadowed by the joyous, the helpful, the happy experiences, and still more that, in the glow of a true and a holy affection, the past seems completely blotted out, and life begins again with the birth of love.

So it is no paradox; it is a truth of the religious experience of the world, that, transfigured by the ardour of a complete trust and affection, the soul of the one-time criminal was "that day in paradise." For these reasons, sir, I believe that these much too dogmatic assertions as to the lasting effects of evil impressions are destined to be relegated to the regions where the ideas of an eternal hell have gone.

At the same time, I trust I shall not be understood to wish to minimise the danger of evil impressions. They are bad enough, without being said to be stereotyped and irreparable.

These, at any rate, are the opinions of an uninstructed layman; if any expert in mental and moral philosophy can show me where I am wrong, I shall be indebted to him.—Yours faithfully,

RICHARD ROBINSON.

Mr. Robinson's very acceptable letter is so suggestive that it is sure to be of much interest to our readers. There is some danger of misinterpreting the operation of the law of cause and consequence, as well as the nature and duration of consequence. The story in "Unity" did not state in what way the writing on the soul "abides." Material effects on glass or wood are manifested in a material way; moral and spiritual effects on the spiritual nature in a spiritual way. Even in material things indelibility on wood is one thing, on water and air quite another. The impression of a drop of iodine in a glass of water, or of the smoke of a gunshot in a small room, and the same in a river and the open air appear differently; the effects may be hidden by fusion with other effects, even in case of a washed-out footstep, but the effects are there as much as ever, even though imperfect human vision cannot see them. Still they abide. They persist in their share of making the quality and colour of the whole.

The same must be true of effects on character. There can be no obliteration in the sense of annihilating an effect. The sum total of the effects of what a man does determines the complexion of his character, but the particular effects are all there at every stage of the character's development, and cannot be wiped out. They will be part of the mixture in the future result. Suffering leaves its effects on character, ultimately turned to blessing; and wrong-doing leaves a permanent effect on character, its evil ultimately counteracted by the good resulting from the misery the wrong produced, and from the predominating good natural to the soul.

The pane of glass, once broken, no longer exists as a pane of glass, and the writing on it is lost; but the soul, being indestructible, everything impressed upon it has part in its development with effects that are permanent, changed or counteracted by combinations with other effects from other causes, yet still abiding there as part of the whole of effects. In the end good prevails; no evil can prevent its ultimate victory in the character. But the character is never just the same composition it would have been had the "black spot" (figurative) of wrong never been in it. Amongst the perfect ones it will no doubt be true that "one star differeth from another star in glory," some shining more brightly and with a clearer light than others as a result of keeping longer in the Light in their past, and less in the darkness than some of their fellows. Whatever retards development of the good, or dims the growing light within, ought to be avoided. The degree of future power in the soul depends upon this. And so there is every reason why it should be said: "How careful, then, should we be in making impressions on the soul—and on the souls of others"—that they should be good impressions.—Ed.

Making a Man.

God said: "I make a man," and lo! the creeds
Broke in his hands, as did the withes that bound
The Hebrew giant; not that he was found
Careless of words, but that all human needs
Plead with him, saying: "Christ-like him who heeds
Man's want and sorrow, putting these above
All forms and phrases in the name of love;
For words are mockery when the time wants deeds."
And in this spirit, lo! the man became
Greater than creeds and forms; and all of these
He used for ends that make success and fame
Seem petty as pass by God's centuries.

—Phillips Brooks.

J. R. Lowell on "Parker."

He's seized with the idea (by his martyrdom fired)
That all men (not orthodox) may be inspired;
Yet though wisdom profane with his creed he may weave in,
He makes it quite clear what he doesn't believe in.

* * * * * *

Every word that he speaks has been fierily furnaced
In the blast of a life that has struggled in earnest;
There he stands, looking more like a ploughman than priest,
If not dreadfully awkward, not graceful at least,
His gestures all downright and same, if you will,
As of brown-fisted Hobnail in hoeing a drill;
But his periods fall on you, stroke after stroke,
Like the blows of a lumberer felling an oak;
You forget the man wholly, you're thankful to meet
With a preacher who smacks of the field and the street,
And to hear, you're not over particular whence,
Almost Taylor's profusion, quite Latimer's sense.

—A Fable for Critics.

Theodore Parker.

Theodore Parker, born August 24th, 1810, in the village of Lexington, Massachusetts, ten miles north-west of Boston, U.S.A., was the son of a farmer. While working on the farm as a young man, Theodore prepared himself in his leisure time for admission to college, without the knowledge of his parents. One night he said suddenly to his father, "Father, I have entered Harvard College to-day." He had spent the day walking to Cambridge and passing the examination, and walking home again. He became distinguished as an omnivorous student and an expert scholar, entered the Unitarian ministry at Roxbury, near Boston, was a personal friend of Emerson, was one of the promoters of the Brook Farm community experiment, and in 1841 he startled the Unitarians by a sermon on "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity." Regarded by most of them as a heretic because he was more radical than they, he was excluded from their pulpits, with few exceptions, his own congregation remaining faithful to him. In 1845 he accepted a pressing invitation to become regular preacher to a new Sunday audience in Boston, which, in 1846, became his regular congregation. For fifteen years at the Melodeon and in the Music Hall, he drew the largest congregations listening to any preacher in America, numbering often 3,000 persons. During that time he spoke not only on theological questions, but on stirring public topics agitating American society at the time. He was active in matters of social reform, pewerfully helped the anti-slavery movement, was the friend and fellow-worker of Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison. He was in great demand as a lecturer in various parts of the United States. A frequent contributor to current literature, he was also a translator from the German of De Wette's "Introduction to the Old Testament." Along with Emerson, he was editor of "The Massachusetts Quarterly Review." His chief work, the famous "Discourse on Matters pertaining to Religion," consisting of a series of lectures, written at the age of 31, greatly excited the theological circles of New England, and is still one of the most radical statements of Free Christianity known. He published a volume, "Ten Sermons of Religion," also another entitled "Theism, Atheism, and the Popular Theology," both characterised, as was the "Discourse," by great spiritual devotion and deep religious faith, and uncompromising exposures of Atheistic fallacies and orthodox superstitions.

He was a brave and heroic champion of hunted negroes fleeing for liberty. His house was a refuge for the fugitives. He defied both the City and State Governments in his protection of escaped slaves, and publicly denounced statesmen who were false to the principles of individual liberty embodied in the United States Constitution. On two occasions he visited Europe, and in England preached in various Unitarian pulpits, making the acquaintance of James Martineau, William Gaskell, Francis Newman, Mary Carpenter, W. J. Fox, Thomas Carlyle, and other influential persons. A victim to overwork and inherited consumption, he died at Florence, Italy, on May 10th, 1860, in his fiftieth year, attended in his last days by Miss Frances Power Cobbe and a few other devoted friends, leaving a wife but no children. After his death Miss Cobbe gathered his works together and published them in fourteen volumes.

When at first Parker shocked the Unitarians of New England in their conservatism, their churches had not many years been severed from the orthodox Congregationalists, and had not yet realised the logical consequences of the Unitarian principles they had embraced under Channing and others. Parker followed out the logic of these principles to their natural and inevitable consequences, and his forceful declarations were providential in arousing needful discussion and in helping forward Unitarian developments. Since his death Parker has come to be regarded, along with Channing, Emerson, and Martineau, as one of the leading prophets of the Unitarian Faith. His theological works, sermons, and prayers are truly representative of the position of Unitarian thought and spirit at the present time.

Converted by a Book.

The late Rev. G. W. Bannister, a convert from the Baptists to Free Christianity or Unitarianism, when minister of the Free Christian Church, Bolton, attended regularly a monthly meeting of Unitarian ministers in his district. On one occasion he told how he had broken away from orthodoxy entirely owing to the reading of one book: Theodore Parker's "Discourse on Matters pertaining to Religion." He said: "I borrowed it from a library. When I took it up to see what it was like, I did as

I usually do—began to read the preface, which was very short, and then made my way into the "Introduction." I had not read many sentences before my orthodoxy was shocked, and a climax of indignation was reached at the end of about two pages, when I came to the following: 'We dare not approach the Infinite One face to face; we whine and whimper in our brother's name, as if we could only appear before the Omnipresent by attorney.' At this I flung the book from the place where I sat, to the furthest corner of the room. And there it lay for three days before I would touch it again. At the end of that time, and in a calmer state of mind, I went and picked it up again, almost afraid to look inside it. But I made another attempt to read it. I read it through. And when I finished it, my orthodoxy was gone, and my whole way of looking at things was changed. Parker had converted me against my will."

The late Rev. J. W. Lake, many years Unitarian minister at Warwick, but a convert from orthodoxy, declared that "the only inspiration which he had to enter the ministry was that which he derived from Parker's "Discourse of Religion." Until he read that book he felt that he could not possibly retain connection with a Christian community. Since then his deepest and devoutest inspirations had been gathered from the same volume."

The late Alderman Harry Rawson, of Manchester, testified at a meeting in London that "There was a time in his own mental history when it had become with him a grave and serious question whether he could hold connection with any of the existing Christian organisations. He acknowledged with deep gratitude that it was to Theodore Parker that he was indebted for being able to see his way more clearly."

The Editor's Study Table.

Books are indispensable to every editor, including the Editor of "Unity." And something said about books that come for review notice, or other books on the study table, may be of service to our readers. People with few opportunities of knowing good books may welcome information and guidance thereon.

This time it must be something about the latest product of the pen of the late Rev. R. A. Armstrong, B.A, a timely volume entitled: "Agnosticism and Theism in the Nineteenth Century." It consists of a course of six lectures prepared for popular audiences, and delivered at Nottingham and Northampton, just before the death of the author last winter. In them is presented a "historical study of Religious Thought," including notices and expositions of the opinions of some of the leading theological thinkers of recent times. It is important to every thoughtful person to know something of the intellectual influences of such poets as Shelley and Wordsworth on the development of religious views; of such philosophers as John Stuart Mill and Thomas Carlyle. In the first lecture there is much that is illuminating concerning these men and the effect of their ideas on the thought of the age. The rise of the Evolution Doctrine and the writings of Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and John Fiske upon that subject, are treated in the second lecture, with Mr. Armstrong's well-known powers of clear exposition. Two other lectures deal with Agnosticism, Materialism, and Atheism as represented by Huxley, Matthew Arnold, Tyndall, and Charles Bradlaugh respectively. The strength and weakness of their views are most lucidly indicated. Lecture V. is on "Pure Theism," with special reference to the ideas put forward by Francis William Newman and Theodore Parker. The concluding lecture is entitled "James Martineau and the Outlook to-day." Mr. Armstrong expresses himself as in great sympathy with Newman and Parker, and, having been a pupil and reverent disciple of Martineau, there is the highest appreciation of that great teacher, along with some notice and criticism of his defects and limitations. As a guide to the development of religious thought in the century recently concluded, this last testament of Mr. Armstrong is most valuable. There is a brief preface by the Rev. Philip Wicksteed, M.A., who describes these lectures as "models of lucidity, candour, and sincerity," and says truly that the death of the author "has disappointed the hopes of many expectant audiences," and that "it was impossible to allow utterances of such weight to be withheld from the public." One very great advantage in reading this volume is that it furnishes valuable information about some of the great books that helped to make the last century famous for revolutions in thought and opinion; for instance: Mill's "Essay on Theism," Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus," Darwin's "Origin of Species," and "The Descent of Man," Spencer's "First Principles," Fiske's "Destiny of Man Viewed in the Light of his Origin," "The Idea of God," and "Through Nature to God," Huxley's "Controverted Questions," Tyndall's "Belfast Address," and "Fragments of Science," F. Newman's "Soul: its Sorrows and Aspirations," Theodore Parker's "Discourse on Matters pertaining to Religion," Martineau's "Types of Ethical Theory," "A Study of Religion," "The Seat of Authority in Religion"—these are described, estimated, and criticised. The very enumeration of such works as included amongst those dealt with in this book indicates much as to its great helpfulness and value. In publishing this volume, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association (Essex Hall, London) has done good public service, and at a price (2/-) within the reach of nearly everybody. F. Newman's book on "The Soul" is now to be had in a sixpenny edition from the same Association, and it is a pity that Theodore Parker's "Discourse" is not issued by this Association and in the same cheap form. No book deserves more to be sent broadcast, or is capable of doing more effective missionary work than that of Parker's.

HOME CIRCLE.

Seek to make your home most lovely,
Let it be a smiling spot,
Where, in sweet contentment resting,
Care and sorrow are forgot!
Where the flowers and trees are waving,
Birds will sing their sweetest song;
Where the purest thoughts will linger,
Confidence and love belong.

A boy walked into a shop where there was a clergyman standing, and said: "I want a loaf." "If——" said the clergyman. The boy replied, "There's no 'if' about it; I want a loaf." But the clergyman, resolved to teach good manners, repeated, "If——" But the boy again said, "I tell you there's no 'if'; I want a loaf!" "Then," said the clergyman, "I'm afraid you go to a bad school, where they don't teach you manners. What school do you go to?" "Why," said the boy ,"you ought to know, Mr. B——; I go to yours."

This anecdote has more than one moral. It implies that there is not much success in teaching religion in a school where, to begin with, the teachers utterly fail to teach good behaviour, right conduct, good manners, Secondly, it suggests that there is another school from which boys and girls come before they get to the public school, namely, the home, and if a boy has not learned to be respectful and courteous to others, it is as much a sad reflection on the home from which he comes as upon the Sunday or week-day school to which he is sent. There is real religion in right conduct.

An orthodox Sunday school teacher was showing a class of boys that there is great merit in believing things to be true which seem to be unreasonable and impossible. He questioned the class on the lesson, and said: "Tell me, what is faith!" A boy who had taken the lesson in a way not anticipated replied: "Faith is believing what you know is not true." Such was the logical and natural conclusion drawn from much that passes for orthodox teaching. How much better to show the young that real faith is never contradictory to what we know to be true, never in agreement with what we know to be untrue, but is based upon truth and reason. What warping of young minds there is in thousands of orthodox homes and schools, for even the orthodox teacher comes from some home circle.

Brotherly Help never Wasted.

God sent His Prophet to show His light to a Man. The man was set in his ways, and his eyes were bent upon the earth, for he was raking in the mire. The prophet showed him that the mire was foul, and he pointed to a star. The Man said, "What care I for stars?" The Prophet said, "It is bright and shining." Said he, "I find bright and shining things in mire."

"But," said the Prophet, "it is great, so that no man can measure it, and high, so that——" He answered, "Should I mind high things?" and turned again to the mire.

So the Prophet returned to God to say that he was wasting time on such a man. God said: "From eternity have I laboured to bring that man where he now is. Will you not help me to lift him higher?"

So the Prophet returned, and helped to rake the mire. The stars shone over them, and, as they raked, the water made pools in the hollows, and the man looked upon the pools. Said he, "Behold, your stars are also in the mire." The Prophet said, "Wherever the light shines, there is the star." He answered joyfully, "I have seen the star," and the Prophet answered, "You see its image only, not its glory."

Then the man looked up, and the stars' rays lit his narrow face, so that it was transfigured, and the mire rake fell from his hands. God said, "Have you 'wasted time' in lifting up a soul?"—(Bolton Hall.)

Not Wealth or Fame.

Father, I will not ask for wealth or fame,
Though once they would have joyed my carnal sense;
I shudder not to bear a hated name,
Wanting all wealth, myself my sole defence.
But give me, Lord, eyes to behold the truth;
A seeing sense that knows the eternal right;
A heart with pity filled, and gentlest truth;
A manly faith that makes all darkness light.
Give me the power to labour for mankind ;
Make me the mouth of such as cannot speak;
Eyes let me be to groping men and blind;
A conscience to the base; and to the weak
Let me be hands and feet; and to the foolish, mind;
And lead still further on such as Thy kingdom seek.
—Theodore Parker.

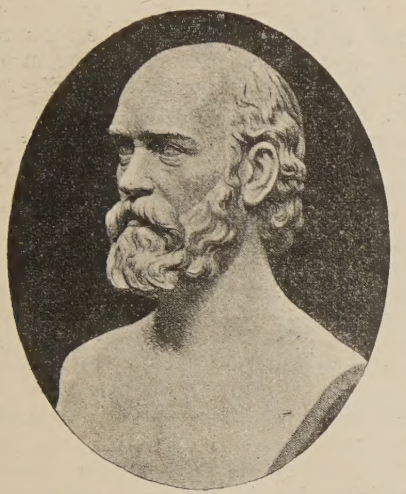
Absolute Confidence in God.

(From one of Theodore Parker's Prayers.)

O Thou who art Infinite Perfection, we thank Thee for Thyself; and we know that out of Thy power, Thy wisdom, Thy justice, and Thy love, have flowed forth this world of matter, and this world of man, and that kingdom of heaven whereunto we all hope to enter at the last. We thank Thee for Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender mercy, which are over all Thy works, and where we cannot see ,save through a glass darkly, we will still trust Thee, with infinite longing, and with absolute confidence, and that love which casteth out every fear.

"Unity."—Vol. II. will include 15 numbers, Oct., 1904, to Dec., 1905, so that henceforward each future volume may begin with Jan. and end with Dec. Vol. II., bound with detailed index, will be issued at the close of the year.

A PROPHET OF
Reasonable Religion:
THEODORE PARKER.



American Unitarian Preacher and Social Reformer.
— Born 1810, Died 1860. —

REASONABLE IDEAS FOR THOUGHTFUL PEOPLE.

SOME OF PARKER'S SAYINGS:—

"Worship with no master but God, no creed but Truth, no service but Love."

"God is not dead! the Bible is not his last word; he inspires men now as much as ever—even more so."

"We read our lesson backward; make a God of our brother, who should be our model."

"Talk not to me of endless hell, where men must suffer for suffering's sake, be damned for an eternity of woe. I tell you there is no such thing."

"If the popular theology were true, then immortality would be the greatest curse which the Almighty could inflict upon mankind."

"What passes for Christianity in our times is not reasonable; no man pretends it. It can only be defended by forbidding a reasonable man to open his mouth."

Read "UNITY," An Organ of Reasonable Religion.
ONE PENNY MONTHLY. *Ivy House, Mottram, Manchester.*

Post Card Propaganda.

The above is a copy of a new postcard published for propaganda purposes by the Editor of "Unity." Every means of sowing the seed of true thought and feeling, about God, man, and human destiny, that can be adopted in any just and reasonable manner, ought certainly to be made use of. "Unity" itself is a seed-sower of very definite ideas, and there are abundant evidences coming to hand that it is doing its work to good effect. But there are many ways of exciting interest, of provoking thought, on matters of reasonable religion; and amongst them post-card propaganda of the kind here suggested may be one of the best. Here is a card which may be sent through the post; one side can be made use of for written correspondence, or even for printed notices, while the other side gives a fine portrait of Theodore Parker, along with a few of his pithy sayings. The portrait is a copy of W. W. Story's bust, carved at Rome in 1860, and already well known to readers of Peter Dean's Life of Parker. The card may be used not only as other picture-postcards for written correspondence on the left half of the address side, but any church wishing to announce special services, or any special event, could have that announcement printed in the left-hand space, so as to serve for postal uses or for house-to-house distribution. Or any church, if such is required, may have the card with one side perfectly plain and blank, with the full space available for specially printed announcements, say, of a series of lectures, sermons, meetings, etc.—suitable for house-to-house distribution in the neighbourhood—or a notice, including a specially warm invitation to the services of the church in question, with information of hours of service, location of the church, and any other matters of interest that may appeal to such persons as the card may be given to. Ministers and church officers making arrangements for winter's activities may see quite a variety of uses to which the card may be put for the furthering of rational Christianity. Will our readers encourage this effort to send "good news" broadcast, by making plentiful use of the facility offered? A series of such cards will follow, with portraits and sayings of other prophets of our rational Faith, if this first of the number appears to meet a real need. (For further particulars see advt., page 125.)

Dangers in Creeds.

A fixed and definitely established creed or "confession of faith" blinds the eyes of men, so that they cannot see the light ever breaking over sea and land as larger knowledge is gained by inquiring thought; it deafens their ears, so that they cannot hear the melodies of truth and love that float through earth, as in each advancing generation the law of the Lord is more intelligently understood and more faithfully obeyed.

How a changeless creed hampers the pursuit of truth may be realised by considering what would happen were it established in any other subject than theology. Suppose a geological, astronomical, chemical, or physiological confession of faith to be drawn up, and every professor at a university to be required to sign and teach it, and every student to pledge himself to believe it—what would be the result? Prevailing errors would be protected and preserved. Research would be fatally impeded in its course. The discovery of new truth would be effected only by a series of martyrdoms.

(H. W. Crosskey, LL.D., "What is a Unitarian Christian?" Essex Hall, London, 1d.)

Religion Applied to Society.

By THEODORE PARKER.

The Absolute Religion of the individual must be "professed" in the institutions of society, and be made life in the world of men. Then Morality will take the form of Industry in all its million modes; of Natural Enjoyment of the products of industry; of Justice, regulating the intercourse of men by the golden rule, which is alike the standard measure in the mind of Man and in the mind of God; the form of Friendship with a few, from whom we ask delight in return for the joy we give; the form of Philanthropy to all, asking no return. Industry will be deemed a divine service; and a man's shop, library, bank, office, warehouse, farm, his station in Church or State—all will be deemed the special temple wherein he is to worship the Father by natural Morality—service with every limb of his body, every faculty of his spirit, every power over matter or man which he has gained. Friendship, with its mutual triumph and reciprocal surrender, Philanthropy, which comes as charity to palliate the effects of ill, or as justice to remove the cause of ill—these will be deemed the noble factors in the religion of society, to work out "a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory." Then the tools of a man's work, the farmer's plough, the mason's trowel, the griddle of the cook, the needle of the seamstress, and the scholar's pen, will be reckoned the consecrated vessels of our divine service, and of man's daily communion with man.

* * * * * *

Then, with the teaching of the Absolute Religion, it will be seen that the great man is only the great servant of Mankind. He that is powerful by money, office, culture, genius, owes mankind an eminence of industry, justice, and love, as pay to God for the opportunities, the station, the strength, which he has received. God gave him greatness by nature; society gave him greatness of culture, of wealth, of station—Why? That he might do the more service, not take the more ease. The man of genius is born to be eyes for the public. If he looks out only for himself, he has denied the faith, and is an Infidel.

Then it will be seen that the true function of the powerful class—men strong by Money, men strong by Culture—is to do mankind an eminent service; to protect the needy, the defenceless, the ignorant, and the wretched. Riches are valuable as they fertilise the soil for human excellence to grow on, not for some lazy weed to rise and rot. If wealth impoverish him that gets, or those from whom it was won, there is a twofold curse, blasting him that takes, and those who aid therein. If superior culture only shuts out the scholar from common men, he had better have spent his years in a coal-pit than in a college. True religion, true manhood, teaches that if you receive genius and talent from God, or culture at the cost of men—you owe the use of all to men, to the poor, the ignorant, the feeble-minded. Science is moral when it opens the eyes of the blind, and teaches the foolish to understand wisdom; Wealth is pious when it helps Charity palliate the ills she cannot cure, and aids Justice to extirpate the wrongs which curse mankind; Strength is religious when it bears the burdens of the weak.

* * * * *

Then men will see that that is the most religious community where, proportionately, the most pains are taken to secure the welfare of all, to speed Genius on its triumphant way to help the poor, the feeble, men of imperfect body and imperfect brain, and those sad wrecks of circumstance we now pile up in jails to moulder and to rot. A Steeple and a Gallows will not always be the signs significant of a Christian land. Men will not measure the religion of society by the number of temples and priests, but by the colleges and school-houses, the hospitals, the asylums for the old, the sick, the deaf, the blind, the foolish, the crazy, the criminal; nay, they will measure it by the honest Industry in business; by Truth in science; by Beauty in literature; by Justice in the State; by the Comfort, the Health, the Manhood of the men.

* * * * * *

That will be thought the most religious nation whose institutions, constitutions, statutes, and decisions conform the most to abstract right, applying this to the action abroad and at home; where the whole people are the best and the best off; and the higher law of God is carried out in the action of the nation with other states, of the government with the people, of class with class, and of man with man. As proofs of the national religion you will bring forward the character of the people—their conduct abroad and at home, their institutions and their men.

* * * * * *

Then law would be justice, loyalty righteousness, and patriotism humanity. Men conscious of the same human nature, and consciously serving the infinite God, must needs find their religion transcending the bounds of their Family, Community, Church, and Nation, and reaching out to every human soul.

A little publication compiled by the Rev. F. Haydn Williams, of Whitby, has just come to hand, entitled "A Casket of Pearls; being the moral instruction of the Bible without its theology," and intended as "An edition of the Bible for Secularists." It is issued from "The New Age Press," price 3d. It is very good for its purpose. "The Spirit of the Reformation," an address by Dr. John Campbell at Belfast, published at the Unitarian Depository (3d.) of that city, is a call to increased activity in the non-subscribing Presbyterian churches of Ireland; it contains some good criticism of ministers and people, and some of the advice given may very profitably be taken to heart.

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Christianity as Christ taught it.
God's Fatherhood for all, for ever.
The Brotherhood of all men, everywhere
Salvation of all; not one to be lost.
Safety of each by the safety of all.
Unity of God in one Person—the Father.
Unity of Man; unity of all Truth.
Freethought in Religion.
Character before creed.
One world at a time.

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to any place of worship, and wish to combine worship with liberty of thought and free inquiry, be sure and attend the Unitarian church or chapel nearest to where you live, or in your neighbourhood. You will be heartily welcome.

UNITARIAN DOCTRINES IN SCRIPTURE.

One God, in one person only:

"The true worshippers shall worship the Father."—John iv., 23.

"When ye pray, say Our Father."—Matt. vi., 9; Luke xi., 2.

"The Lord our God, the Lord is One."—Mark xii., 29.

"To us there is but one God, the Father."—I. Cor. viii., 6. (See also Isa. xlii., 8; xliv., 6; the words "Trinity," "God the Son," "God the Holy Ghost"—are not in the Bible).

Jesus, a Man:

"This man—the carpenter's son"—Matt. xiii., 55. "A man that hath told you the truth."—John viii., 40. "A man which told me all things."—John iv., 29. "The man—called Jesus."—John ix., 11. "Jesus—a man approved of God."—Acts ii., 22. "The one man Jesus Christ."—Rom. v., 15.

Man, the child, the son of God, and Human Nature Divine:

(God) "Our Father."—Matt. vi., 9; Luke ix., 2; Rom. i., 7; I. Cor. i., 3; and many passages.

(Men) "Sons of" (God).—Matt. v., 45; Luke vi., 35. "We are—the offspring of God."—Acts xvii., 28-29. "We are the children of God."—Rom. viii., 15, 16, 21; Gal. iii., 26; I. John iii., 1-2; Philip ii., 15. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xix., 14. "The true light" in "every man."—John i., 9. "Partakers of the divine nature."—II. Peter i., 4. "The lump is holy."—Rom. xi., 16.

The Fatherhood of God, universal, unchangeable, everlasting—infinitely loving:

"Good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."—Psalm 145, 9. "He is kind—merciful—to the unthankful and evil."—Luke vi., 35, 36. "God is no respecter of persons."—Acts x., 34; II. Chron. xix., 7; Rom. ii., 11; Eph. vi., 9. "Not the will of your Father—that one should perish."—Matt. xviii., 14; "God is love."—I. John iv., 8.

(Nothing) "shall be able to separate us from the love of God."—Rom. viii., 38, 39.

(He has) "no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning."—James i., 17; "Willeth that all men should be saved."—I. Tim. ii., 4.

The Brotherhood of Man—Universal:

"All ye are brethren."—Matt. xxiii., 8.

"Love your enemies!"—Matt. v., 44; Luke vi., 27.

"Inasmuch as ye did it to one—ye did it to me."—Matt. xxv., 40.

"We who are many are one—and severally members one of another."—Rom. xii., 5; I. Cor. x., 17; Eph. iv., 25. (See also I. Cor. xii., 26; Gal. iii., 28; John x., 16; Matt. xx., 16).

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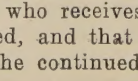
A blue pencil mark here  intimates to the individual subscriber who receives this copy that his orders are completed, and that a renewed subscription is now due if the continued supply of "Unity" is desired.

[ADVT.]

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"Do thyself no harm." Acts xvi., 28.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. vii., 16.

"To HIM that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to HIM it is sin." James iv., 17.

"Be ye therefore perfect even as your (Heavenly) Father." Matt. v., 48.

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I "abstain from all appearance of evil." 1 Thess. v., 22.

I "Cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. Rom. xiii., 12.

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."

"Whether therefore I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, I do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor x., 31.

"That I can reprove while the mote is in my own eye."

I "am my brother's keeper." Gen. iv., 9.

I do "love my neighbour as myself." Matt. xix., 19.

That "whatsoever is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or anything of good report, praise or virtue, I think on these things and do them." Phil iv., 8.

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